

History and Aesthetics of Experimental Film
TuTh 2-4 325 Annie May Swift

Chuck Kleinhans
office: 316 AMS, 491-2255
office hours: 4-5 Tu and by appt.

TA: Dee Tudor
office: 326 AMS
office hours: 4-5 Tu Th and by appt. before class.

syllabus, version no. 1

An introduction to the history and aesthetics of
the film avant garde. Prerequisite: RTF B20.

The course combines screenings, lectures,
discussions, and readings. Films are the main
texts for the course. Films will be seen in class
and cannot be seen at other times. Thus attendance
is important and will help determine the grade.
Assigned work includes reports on field work in
Chicago's experimental film and video scene and
ajoining art world, a midterm and a final. Grad
students will do additional reading.

This course is a prerequisite for C23-2, a topic
oriented course on experimental film and video
which will deal with personal, autobiographical,
and portrait work in spring 87. It can be
completed with creative work; C23-1 cannot.

Required texts (available at Norris Center Store)
Richter, Hans. Dada: Art and Anti-Art
Vogel, Amos. Film as a Subversive Art
Recommended text (req. for grads)
Sitney, P. Adam. Visionary Film (2nd ed.)
Additional readings will be available at KopyKat

Tu Jan 6
course administration
intro
Wavelength (Michael Snow)

Th Jan 8

Report (Bruce Conner)
Scorpio Rising (Kenneth Anger)
read: Vogel to p. 44.

Tu Jan 13
Meshes of the Afternoon (Maya Deren/Alexander
Hammid)
Window Water Baby Moving (Stan Brakhage)
Asparagus (Susan Pitt)
read: Vogel, 45-75; 258-262

Th Jan 15
Blacktop (Charles and Ray Eames)
Bridges Go Round (Shirley Clarke)
Songs 8-14 (Brakhage, 8mm--16mm)
Analogies (Peter Rose)
read: Vogel, 76-118

Tu Jan 20
Entr'acte (Rene Clair/Francis Picabia)
Emak Bakia (Man Ray)
The Lead Shoes (Sidney Peterson)
read: Vogel, 119-158
White,

Th Jan 22
Miss Jesus Fries on Grill (Dorothy Wiley, 12
min.)
The Weenie Worm (Dorothy Wiley, 11 min.)
Cabbage (Dorothy Wiley, 9 min.)
Ralph Records anthol.
read: Vogel, 159-234

Tu Jan 27
Syntagma (Valie Export, 1983, 17 min.)
Other Reckless Things (Janis Crystal Lipzin,
1984, 20 min.)
Solidarity (Joyce Weiland, 1973, 11 min.)
read: Vogel, 235-304

Th Jan 29
*****in class midterm exam*****
Geography of the Body (Willard Mass/Marie
Menken)
5:10 to Dreamland (Bruce Conner)
Kustom Kar Kommandoes (Kenneth Anger)

read: Vogel, 305 to end.

Tu Feb 3

Un Chien Andalou (Luis Bunuel/Salvador Dali)
The Seashell and the Clergyman (Germaine
Dulac)

read:

Th Feb 5

Hans Richter Program
Rhythmn 21
Diagonal Symphony (Viking Eggeling)
Rhythm 23
Film Study
Ghosts Before Breakfast
Inflation
Everything Turns
Race Symphonie
Two-Penny Magic
Richter, Dada, 1-100

Tu Feb 10

Dreams that Money Can Buy (Richter, 1947, 80
min.)

read: Richter, Dada, 100-228

Th Feb 12

Guns of the Trees (Jonas Mekas)

Tu Feb 17

Money (Henry Hills, 15 min.)
Coalfields (Bill Brand, 39 min.)
The Right Side of My Brain (Richard
Kern/Lydia Lunch)

Th Feb 19

Nos. 1-5 (Harry Smith)
Mosaic (Peter Kubelka)
Menken program
Visual Variations on Noguchi
Dwightiana
Arabesque for Kenneth Anger
Notebook

Tu Feb 24

Red Desert (Michelangelo Antonioni)

Th Feb 26
L'Age d'or (Bunuel)

Tu Mar 3
*****grad book report due
Mr. Hayashi (Bruce Baillie)
A Hurrah for Soldiers (Baillie)
The Gymnasts (Baillie)
Mass for the Dakota Sioux (Baillie)

Th Mar 5
All My Life (Bruce Baillie)
To Parsifal (Baillie)
Yellow Horse (Baillie)
Termination (Baillie)
Still Life (Baillie)

Tu Mar 10
*****final exam, in-class, part one*****
Valentin de las Sierras (Baillie)
Castro Street (Baillie)
Roslyn Romance (Baillie)

Th Mar 12
*****Final exam, in-class, part two*****
Films TBA

Assignments. All students are required to turn in four reports of about 500-750 words on outside screening events. The reports may be subjective or objective, concentrate on the overall experience or just one film/tape, etc. There will be a list of suitable screenings posted outside of Chuck's office. The purpose of these fieldwork assignments is to give students additional screenings and experiences in Chicago's avant garde art and media community. Undergrads turn in reports to Dee; grads to Chuck. 25% of final grade for undergrads, 20% for grads.

Grad students have an additional assignment (10% of final grade), which is to read a book and prepare

for distribution to the entire class a five page (1500 words) report which presents a description of the contents and form/style and which discusses the book in a way to be useful and interesting to the undergrads in the course. Due Mar 3. Choose from the following list:

Sitney, P. Adam, ed. Film Culture Reader
Tyler, Parker. Underground Film
Youngblood, Gene. Expanded Cinema.
Stauffacher, Frank. Art in Cinema.
Curtis, David. Experimental Cinema.
Mekas, Jonas. Movie Journal.
Dwoskin, Steve. Film Is...
Hanhardt, John, ed. A History of the American
Avant-garde Cinema
Curtis, David. Experimental Film.
Battcock, Gregory, ed. The New American Cinema.
Renan, Sheldon. An Introduction to the American
Underground Film.
Ehrenstein, David. Film: The Front Line--1984
Rosenbaum, Jonathan. Film: The Front Line--1983

Exams. The midterm will count 35% of the final grade and concentrate on writing a short essay on each of three films to be shown in class. The final (40% of final grade) will take place over two days. On the first day students will write an essay after seeing a Bruce Baillie film (one hour). On the second day students will write an essay on a film which is not announced in advance, and be examined over the entire course--screenings, readings, lectures and discussion (two hours).

How to get to the outside screenings (phone first!):

Experimental Film Coalition. Randolph Street Gallery. 666-7737. 756 N. Milwaukee Ave. Drive: Ridge to Ashland, Ashland to Milwaukee/Division/Ashland. S. on Milwaukee, about 2 blocks south of Chicago Ave. Parking on the street and across the street. El/bus. Chicago el stop is closed at night. Best bet is el to the Loop, then Milwaukee Ave. bus to gallery (phone CTA for exact location). This is not a great neighborhood; try to make the first show if you're

alone or on public transportation (there are usually several folks at the bus stop heading back to the Loop after the show; if the wind is right, you can smell the fresh bread from the bakery a couple of blocks away).

Chicago Filmmakers (6 West Hubbard, 329-0854) and Center for New Television (11 E. Hubbard, 565-1787). Drive: Outer drive to Ontario, east to State, south to Hubbard. Pay lot at State/Hubbard, freebie lot at Dearborn/Illinois. El: exit at Grand, 2 blocks south. This neighborhood is quite busy at night and fairly safe, but be alert. Local attractions: great and reasonable Thai food at Star of Siam and River Kwai, excellent but expensive seafood at Shaw's on Hubbard. Andy's (next to CNT) is a well-known Chicago live jazz bar, esp. Friday after work (lots of yuppies trying to pick each other up, etc.). The Burger place at State/Hubbard is good for burgers. If you walk back up to Ontario and head west you'll run into the Hard Rock Cafe, Limelight, Ed's, Ditka's, etc.

School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Columbus and Jackson, 443-3737. (behind the Museum) Drive: Outer Drive to Monroe, west to Columbus Drive, park on Columbus or Monroe St. garage (offers escort to car at night). El: exit at Jackson, east to Columbus (over the IC tracks). The school has an ok cafeteria which has varying hours, ask at the desk at the entrance. There are also machines. Can be a fairly deserted area at night, be alert.

Facets Multimedia. 1517 W. Fullerton. 281-4114. Drive: Outer Drive to Fullerton, west to Facets. Or Ridge to Ashland, Ashland to Fullerton, east one block. El/bus: exit at Fullerton. Take Fullerton bus West. This is a gentrifying neighborhood, with a few restaurants and bars, mostly on Fullerton, but if you go back east to Halsted/Lincoln/Fullerton there are a lot of live music bars, restaurants, etc. NB. Facets is notorious for having the worst projection in Chicago; expect anything, you won't be too surprized (but everyone in the media community has horror stories). They do have an excellent

selection of video tapes for rental/sale--lots of European films, etc.